

Begly

OF THE

HON'BLE DONALD FRIELL MCLEOD, C.B.,

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB,

TO THE ADDRESS OF THE

NATIVE NOBILITY AND GENTRY

OF

LAHORE AND UMRITSUR.

CALCUTTA :

PRINTED AT THE "ENGLISHMAN" PRESS.

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REPLY
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IT is with no ordinary satisfaction, that I have received from the hands of Dr. Leitner, your address regarding the scheme which you have devised, and have partially set on foot, for encouraging and directing in this Province the progress of Oriental Literature and Science, and the spread of knowledge through the Vernaculars—I have felt greatly gratified to find that the few words addressed by me to the Director of Public Instruction have been taken up, and the views, which I urged in them, expanded by you, with an earnestness and cordiality which I had no right to expect for them. Your learned and truly sympathizing friend and adviser, who has come some hundreds of miles to deliver your address, and communicate your feelings and desires, has had the benefit, not only of drawing largely from the founts of European knowledge, but of mixing much and freely with Oriental races in other lands, whereby he has been enabled to discriminate all that is calculated to be unsuitable or distasteful to you, from what may be turned to good account, and likely to prove, if judiciously worked out, of the highest value. I feel very grateful to him, for having thus apprehended, and pointed out to you the way, and to you for having thus far, so generously and so heartily followed it.

Some among you may doubtless be aware, though all of you cannot be so, that in 1835 A. D., under the auspices of Lord William Bentinck, the Governor General of India, the rules and principles to be followed by

Government and its Officers, in the work of education, were placed on a new basis. Amongst those who were the main advisers and promoters of this measure, are to be found the names of Macaulay, Trevelyan, Duff and others, well known as amongst the most enlightened and earnest friends of the natives of Hindustan. Dissatisfaction was justly felt and avowed by them at the meagre results which had previously been attained by efforts made to convey instruction to the people through the languages of the country, and it was determined that thenceforth, the English language should be chiefly relied on, as the means of importing to our subjects in this land ~~the~~ knowledge of the West.

Up to that time, no serious effort had been made, to employ those languages as a medium for imparting the knowledge which European nations most value, so that it is no matter for surprise, that such dissatisfaction should have been felt. But there were at the time, not a few who were of opinion, that the scheme of Education then determined upon was too exclusive, as well as practically ungenerous, from omitting and decrying all that you value the most. And although great progress has undoubtedly been made since then — many distinguished and enlightened scholars have been raised from amongst your countrymen — and the desire for Education has greatly increased on every hand, there are now a still larger number amongst us, and I must avow myself to be one of this number, who consider that the results which have been attained, show that opinion to have been correct; inasmuch as, notwithstanding some brilliant exceptions, the great bulk of our scholars never attain more than a very superficial knowledge, either of English, or of the subjects they study in that language, while the mental training imparted is, as a general rule, of a purely imitative character ill calculated to raise the nation to habits of vigorous or independent thought.

It appears indeed evident, that to impart knowledge in a foreign tongue must of necessity greatly increase the difficulties of Education. In England, where the Latin and Greek languages are considered an essential part of a polite Education, all general instruction is conveyed, not in those languages, but in the Vernacular of the country — and it seems difficult to assign a sufficient reason, why a different principle should be acted upon here. It was doubtless hoped, by the eminent men who inaugurated the revised arrangements, that as youths were sent forth from our collegiate Institutions, thoroughly imbued with a taste for the Literature, Science, and Art of other lands and gifted with superior attainments in these, they would devote themselves to facilitating the path for their fellow-countrymen — and that a Vernacular Literature of a superior order would thus spring up. But the

necessity for creating such a Literature does not appear to have been practically kept in view, and it is an undoubted fact that, up to the present time, as regards Urdu and Hindu, the Vernacular languages of Upper India, little or no progress has been made towards the attainment of this end. So that your countrymen have as yet no means afforded them of acquiring, in their own languages, some fair portion at least of that knowledge, of which such abundant stores exist in the languages of the West.

Nor do I feel at all hopeful, that any thing like a vigorous, original, or copious Vernacular Literature will be produced, within our generation, unless very special efforts be made for securing this end. While ~~the~~ system now in force appears to me but ill-adapted for such a purpose, the amount of time which is necessary to devote to the various subjects studied in our schools, where these are taught in the English language, leaves but little time for perfecting our pupils in their knowledge of that language itself. Many parents have complained to me of this as regards their sons, and it cannot be denied, at least as far as this Province is concerned, that a really good English Scholar is but rarely produced, even from amongst those who have matriculated at the University. Vigorous mental training appears to be but little aimed at, while the youths who are attracted to our Schools or Colleges, are for the most part those who desire only to qualify themselves for public employ, or to acquire a colloquial knowledge of English, seldom or never including youths of those classes who are used to devote themselves wholly to the cause of learning.

And this brings me to the defect, which I myself more especially deplore, in the system of instruction at present almost exclusively followed, viz : that it has tended, though not intentionally, to alienate from us, in a great measure, the really learned men of your race. Little or nothing has been done to conciliate these, while the Literature and Science which they most highly value have been virtually ignored. The consequence has been that the men of most cultivated minds amongst our race and yours, have remained but too often widely apart, each being unable either to understand, or to appreciate the other. And thus we have virtually lost the aid and co-operation of those classes who, I feel assured, afforded by far the best instruments for creating the Literature we desire. This is, in my opinion, very much to be lamented—and where a different policy has been pursued by individuals, following the bent of their own instincts, and striving to attain a better knowledge of those by whom they are surrounded, I have myself witnessed the most remarkable and gratifying results.

Many years ago I had the privilege of being thrown much with the late Mr. Lancelot Wilkinson then Political Agent in Bhopal, a Gentleman of

great enlightenment and benevolence, who had collected around him at Se-hore a considerable number of Pundits, had read with them in Sanskrit, some of their best astronomical works—and advancing from this basis, led them on to higher branches of Mathematical Science, not included in their methods of calculation. The consequence was, that an ardent desire after knowledge had sprung up amongst them such as we may look for in vain, in our English Schools and Colleges. An active correspondence had commenced between them and the learned men of Bombay, Ujain, Benares and other parts, regarding what they considered as "the new philosophy." Had the life of that lamented Philanthropist been spared, I have no doubt that an Educational movement would have been matured, which would have made itself felt far and wide throughout India. As an instance of what his efforts effected in the case of Individuals, I would point to the accomplished Professor of Natural Philosophy in the Sanskrit College of Benares, Bapu Deva Shashtri, a Mahratta Pundit, who joined Mr. Wilkinson as a youth, remained with him for some years, and still regards his memory with filial affection. This very estimable native gentleman, besides being a thorough Sanskrit Scholar, has acquired an excellent knowledge of English, and has but few equals amongst his countrymen as a Mathematician. He has translated into English the Suria Siddhanta; and has annotated a translation of the Siddhanta Shiremani, made by Mr. Wilkinson—both of which works have been published by the Asiatic Society, under the auspices of the Venerable Archdeacon Pratt. He has written in Hindui, and published an excellent treatise on Algebra—and has for some years been engaged on a complete treatise on Astronomy, in the issuing of which, you may perhaps be able to assist him.

— A somewhat similar course to that followed by Mr. Wilkinson in Bhopal, was pursued by the late distinguished Principal of the Benares College, Dr. Ballantyne. The Sanskrit Department of that College is one of the few Institutions remaining, amongst those maintained by Government, which is especially devoted to Oriental studies—and Dr. Ballantyne's intimate acquaintance with the Sanskrit language, combined with rare accomplishments as a European Scholar, enabled him in a very short time to gain the confidence and respect of its Pundits. A knowledge of the English language, which had previously been regarded by them as altogether undesirable and forbidden, soon began to be eagerly desired by their sons and pupils. And when I left Benares in 1839, he had succeeded in forming an English class of young Pundits, already well skilled in Sanskrit lore who evinced the keenest desire, not only to master the language itself, but to acquire some-

what of the stores of knowledge recorded in it. As their minds had been already trained to vigorous habits of thought, by mastering the wonderful Grammar of their own learned language, they brought to the study of English, an amount of acumen and spirit of enquiry, which obliged Dr. Ballantyne, as he himself informed me, to re-study his own language, that he might fully appreciate and understand its niceties, and reply to their queries. And he always regarded this class as the most interesting one with which he had ever been connected. With the subsequent history of these youths, I am not acquainted —but I trust that some at least amongst them have grown up into scholars of a very superior order—and ~~I feel~~ sure, that had not personal trials, sickness, and ultimate departure from the country, retarded his career in India, and finally brought it to a close, a great work would have been achieved by him.

Both of the gentlemen whom I have named, devoted their principal, though not their undivided attention, to the Sanskrit language and its derivatives, chiefly because in the localities where they resided, these were most valued by the people. But there can be no doubt—and of this none can better assure you than Dr. Leitner—that the Arabic, Persian, and other Oriental languages may be employed in the same spirit and with the same results. The Arabian authors, especially of the earlier Mahomedan periods, have left as legacies to their posterity, works of profound learning and of great value, on many subjects ; as the authors of the Siddhantas and other works have amongst the Hindus and Budhists. No materials would have been refused by either of those gentlemen which under the circumstances in which they were placed, appeared likely to secure the object which they had in view ; that of leading the thoughtful ones among the races around them, to enter fully into the spirit of the best of their own authors, and compare the works of these with the works of the learned of modern times. The efforts of individuals, however, if they have not the good fortune to be carried on by others of a like mind, can be of but little avail, when they are removed from the scene, and such is the fate which has befallen the labors of both of these remarkable men. With you the case is different. It is in your power, if you act prudently and wisely, to give permanence and solidity to the measures on which you may now resolve.

I by no means intend, however, by what I have said above, that the study of your own classic authors should be your end and sole aim, in the educational measures you may devise for your fellow-countrymen, but I desire to direct your attention to their works because they have been almost wholly overlooked in existing Educational Schemes, and because I am

convinced that, if rightly employed, they will prove a most important addition to the means of mental culture at present employed. I know how deeply you value and revere these, and respond to any appreciation of them by others. I know that they contain much that is of great value, and I know too, how admirably adapted many of them are, for training the minds of youths to vigorous habits of thought.

There is a Sanskrit couplet, with which many of you are doubtless familiar ;

Yadyapi shuddam, loka viruddham,
~~N~~āsiyan, nacharamyan.

to the effect that it is not wise to pursue a course which is opposed to the feelings of the people—however excellent in itself—and believing that this maxim applies to the present case, I think that no Educational system which excludes all reference to the Literature most appreciated by you, can be considered complete or appropriate here.

But Science and Art, and all branches of human knowledge, have made wondrous advances, as the world has grown older—and so far from desiring to ignore this fact—it is because I am convinced that if your sons be trained up under the guidance of cultivated minds, to the standard of their illustrious ancestors, they will themselves be the first to perceive and to acknowledge it—and to lay hold with eagerness upon the additional treasures which the researches of later times have added to the ancient store—while I feel equally sure that it will become the pride and the aim of the most generous minds amongst them, to spread a knowledge of these treasures amongst their countrymen at large. The enlightened spirit which pervades the writing of many of your ancient authors, shows of what they were capable in the midst of much surrounding darkness, and while it cannot be denied that their remote posterity have deteriorated sadly from that spirit which spread a halo of learning and intellectual vigour around many Eastern lands, at a period when the natives of the west were still in a state of barbarism, it will be for you, and for others who may be actuated by like aims to strive to restore this spirit, and to recover for these lands a portion at least of those trophies, which other competitors in the race for intellectual precedence have heretofore snatched from them.

This province cannot pretend at present, even to an equality with other parts of India, in what relates to learning and intellectual progress. Its condition, for some generations past, has been unfavorable to such pursuits, and it is still comparatively poor; while other Provinces have made great advances in enterprize and physical prosperity. But nevertheless, you have taken a step in advance in this matter, which does you infinite

honor. You have in Dr. Leitner an adviser, who is actuated by the same spirit which moved Mr. Wilkinson and Dr. Ballantyne; in Mr. Griffin, you have a friend, who, though not long familiar with Oriental races, has learned warmly to sympathise with them, and in your Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Aitchison, you have a wise and benevolent counsellor, to whom you may always resort with confidence; your Commissioner, Mr. Cooper, and others, whom I need not name, watch your proceedings with deep interest; and I am well aware that you gratefully appreciate the friendliness of those who have encouraged you thus far.

The earnestness and industry with which you have hitherto conducted your proceedings afford the best guarantee for the future, and if your scheme be carried out with judgment and moderation, as well as rendered complete and practical in itself, I cannot doubt that it will succeed and lead to very important results. I feel very confident myself of the soundness of the views by which this movement has been aroused, and having this confidence, I shall hope to see the chord which you have touched vibrate through the land, while I feel sure that the movement will be warmly responded to by the nations of the west. The University has included your classical languages amongst those to be studied for the higher examinations, and an excellent paper in the *Calcutta Intelligencer* for October 1863, on this subject, with other publications that might be mentioned, show that you have many warm sympathisers amongst Englishmen in other parts of India.

You must not, however, conceal from yourselves, that your consultations must be carried on, and decisions arrived at, with great care and deliberation, to enable you to supplement in an effective manner, the work which is being carried on by the Educational Department of Government, and that it behoves you to seek the advice and co-operation of all who take an interest in the cause, and are capable of assisting. You will thus secure the collective judgment of many minds, regarding the subject from different points of view—and thus alone in an undertaking of such magnitude, and in some respects so novel, can you, in my opinion, make your footing sure. You should guard against even the appearance of being too pretentious at first starting—but yet must bear in mind, that you have a serious and great work before you—and must not rest content with merely evincing enthusiasm yourselves, or exciting it in others.

Some of your countrymen have preceded you elsewhere, in evincing a consciousness that such efforts as you contemplate, are urgently required. In the Society established at Allyghur, under the auspices of the distinguished Principal Sudder Amin, Moulvi Syad Ahmad, in the Mahomedan Association of Calcutta; and in kindred bodies elsewhere;—I trust

that you will find zealous and efficient co-adjutors in at least one branch of your labors. But I would urge you, as I have said before, to proceed cautiously and prudently—feeling your way—and taking no new step, until the last taken has been rendered secure. You should bear in mind that the special object aimed at, to disseminate as far as possible, the knowledge supplied by all lands, without surrendering the nationality of your proceeding, and hence, I would urge you to adhere to Oriental models, whether in the designation of your Institutions, the degrees or honors they may confer, or the scientific technology they may adopt, rather than unnecessarily import ~~terms from~~ European lands, which last appear to me to be as unsuitable here as would be the modes of dress of other nations, if substituted for the more graceful garments of your own.

I think it premature to discuss at the present time, and in this place, some of the measures urged in your address, such as conferring on your Institutions authority to grant diplomas, degrees, &c., and giving the preference for Government employ, to those applicants who may be thus distinguished. But as your arrangements become more matured, we may hope that such points will be adjusted in a manner satisfactory to you, and that every reasonable concession will be gladly made by those with whom the power rests. There are, however, a few points to which it is necessary that I advert, before concluding this reply.

First.—You request that your principal Educational Institution, under whatever designation may be ultimately determined for it, may be honored by the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen of England. And on this point, all that I can promise is, that so soon as your proceedings shall have become further advanced, and one or more Institutions shall have been established on approved principles, I will submit your request, for the favorable consideration of the Supreme Government, with a view to its transmission to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, and submission by him, should he deem this fitting, for the consideration of Her Most Gracious Majesty. The hearty and effective manner in which His Excellency the Viceroy has spontaneously evinced his approval of your project, affords sufficient guarantee that you will have his cordial support, and none of you can doubt with what deep interest Her Majesty regards all that may conduce to the benefit of her Indian subjects.

Secondly.—You request me to secure as far as possible, the pecuniary aid of Government in the form of an equivalent to the entire amount of Donations collected from private parties. And a grant-in-aid equal to the amount of Annual Subscriptions. The returns which accompany your

address show that at the time of its preparation, Donations amounting to Rs. 8,138, and yearly Subscriptions aggregating Rs. 7,181 per annum, had been promised. These are large amounts—and as the above include only the Subscriptions of His Excellency the Viceroy, and His Highness the Raja of Kappurthulla, with the contributions of the Communities of Lahore and Umritsur—while other localities have already intimated their desire to co-operate—larger sums may be looked for as your proceedings become more generally known. Whether it will be possible for Government to supplement all the income thus derived from private sources I cannot undertake to say—but I have entered in the Budget ~~for the~~ coming year, on this account, such a sum as it has appeared to me reasonable to propose—and I venture to entertain a confident hope, that for the encouragement of Educational efforts, so entirely in accordance with the views set forth in the Educational Despatch of 1854, on which all grants-in-aid are based, the Government will gladly concede such amount as the state of the Finances may permit, without impairing the direct operations of Government through its own Educational Institutions.

Lastly.—You urge that the fixed endowment of your Institutions may be allowed to take the form of a Jagir, yielding a yearly income equal to the interest of the aggregate donations of the public, with Government equivalent. I am not aware why a Jagir should be preferred, as an endowment to an investment in the Promissory Notes of Government, or other suitable securities. The Supreme Government has frequently expressed a strong disinclination to make over to a Jagirdar who has not heretofore held them, lands of which the proprietorship belongs to other parties, and although the same objections might not perhaps exist, to conferring a new Jagir on an Educational body, which could have no concern with its management, and would simply enjoy the yearly revenues—it is not apparent to me what special advantage could result from such an arrangement; while it might in some respects prove inconvenient to the grantees themselves. If, however, any definite and well considered proposal to this effect be hereafter submitted, I shall be prepared to give it my careful attention.

In conclusion, I would express the hope, that you will in no wise relax your efforts; or allow the spirit of earnestness and hopefulness, with which you have entered on this undertaking, to fade or diminish, as you meet with occasional difficulties and disappointments. Your aims are noble, and fraught with vast importance to the interests of your country, so that you may rely upon the hearty good wishes and encouragement of all generous minds, who desire its welfare. The British Government labors under many disadvantages in the work of Education—its position and its principles preclud-

ing it from approaching those subjects which relate to the highest interest of man—and it hails in consequence with all the greater satisfaction, efforts such as yours, emanating from the people themselves, to work out their own improvement. May all your proceedings be conducted in a spirit, not only of earnestness, but humble trust for guidance on that power who rules all our destinies—and I cannot doubt that results will be attained which will afford cause of rejoicing to all.

D. MCLEOD,

Lieut. Governor, Punjab.

2nd February, 1866.